19:Wilson E-5 (ca. 1950) 1960
FL11 Luo FL11



this number, 90 were male suicides and 130 female. I have selected for the purpose of this chapter 10 male cases and 13 female cases as typical, and these were investigated in more detail to provide examples. Considerable time was spent among the villagers in each case, and full discussions were held with the elders in an attempt to determine the motive and the events which led up to the suicide. For obvious reasons, I shall not use correct names when describing these cases.

MALE SUICIDES.

Male suicides in Luo usually follow loss of status. Seven of the ten cases can be so classified. The first five are of the type which involved intense emotional feelings of shame, loss of honor and status within the framework of the indigenous culture. Following these are two case histories of suicides which involved loss of status in the acquired or modern sense. Two cases will be described which involved the loss of status through poverty and the loss of traditional respect of sons, and finally one case which resulted from social ostracism.

The first suicide concerned a man whose younger brother married before he did. In Jaluo society, men of the extended family marry in strict order of status, that is, the senior son of the senior wife must marry first. It may happen that he is younger in chronological age than, perhaps, a son of a more junior wife, but even in this circumstance, the younger son in years, who is senior in status, is technically married before his brother—that is, the payment of the first animals for a young girl allow the senior son to marry.

## Suicide Case No. 1.

A young man who was the *senior* son of a *senior* wife was chronologically the oldest of all the sons in the village. His father and mother were both dead and, although he would eventually become head of the homestead, until he married he was regarded as a junior

19:Wilson E-5 (ca. 1950) 1960
FL11 Luo FL11



159
762
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in cattle, and had a permanent modern house at his homestead where four of his wives cultivated large gardens. His fifth wife lived with him at his place of employment. At the time of his suicide he was in the process of marrying a sixth wife when, during one of the marriage ceremonies at her village, a brother of the bride objected to her becoming his wife. He charged that the man had already too many wives and could not look after them. As proof, he offered the evidence that his most recent wife, the fifth one, was no more than a prostitute and that he, himself, had used her on several occasions. This caused a fight in the village and quarrels which led to the exchange of many curses between the two groups, and therefore the wedding could never take place. The driver returned to his homestead to confront the wife named in the incident with the accusation and, in typical Luo fashion, she calmly admitted her guilt, chiding him to do something about it. He beat her severely and she ran from her house and spent the night in the bush. He brooded all night on what had happened and on the shame his wife had brought him. Moreover, he knew that he was shortly to be accused of fraudulent conversion of funds by the Government and would lose his job, [illegible] which were considered really serious. However, in his emotional state, these must be considered as contributory causes. He could see his whole world collapsing around him.

578

The next morning he sent his servant, a young lad, to the butcher's shop for meat in order to get him out of the way. He then hanged himself from the ceiling of his hut.

558

My Luo informants state with confidence that the prime cause of this suicide was the behavior of his wife, which had brought shame to a proud and successful man, so that he could no longer face his friends. The fact that the Government was interested in recovering a large sum of money which he was alleged to have used for his own purposes is, [illegible] opinion however, a contributory factor.

19:Wilson E-5 (ca. 1950) 1960
FL11 Luo FL11



159 762 where he was headmaster. His final act was to write to all those involved in this series of incidents, which had taken nearly three years, to the effect that his daughter had killed him, that shame was brought to his clan and lineage, and that the liaison she had formed with Okare would end in disaster. He swore he would return in spirit to ensure that the marriage would end in failure.

159 762 ● 558 797 It can be seen from this case that the difficult transition faced by even the most educated Christian Jaluo is complicated by the intense residual customary law and the attitudes of the people regarding the authority of a father and the duty of his daughter to this authority. The father in his case was a well educated, highly respected, important person in his district. The daughter, by her behavior, had humiliated him and he took recourse in indigenous rules and beliefs to solve his problems. They were initially successful. In the end, however, the threat to his status as a Christian of the fact that he had married his daughter by force to a Christian who was already married and therefore a bigamist in the eyes of the Church, brought shame and disaster to his social position as a Christian headmaster. His final act, however, was typically an indigenous one. He would not face the shame and humiliation brought to him by the course of events, so he took refuge in traditional recourse to suicide as a curse to the future happiness of those whom he thought had caused his grievance. To the end, therefore, he struggled to obtain the best of two worlds.

#### FEMALE SUICIDES

762 The most common cause of suicide among females is domestic quarrels and, coupled with that, the fear of physical violence from their husbands. Secondly, jealousy between co-wives; thirdly, the result of extreme grief, and finally, illness.

In the first category, out of the thirteen cases recorded from our sample, seven were of the domestic quarrel type. Of these, one was complicated by a curse from the husband, another